

*Derby Days in Stuttgart***Local scouts feed their need for speed**

As Bruce Bland (in striped shirt) looks on, Will Kasberg (with arm raised) celebrates his victory, while Grant Whitmire (standing) agonizes over what might have been at the end of an extremely close heat during the Panzer Pinewood Derby March 29 in Böblingen Elementary School.

Story & photos by
Hugh C. McBride

Ingenuity and imagination mingled with drama and desire in the Stuttgart area as Pinewood Derbies were hotly contested on Patch Barracks, Panzer Kaserne and Robinson Barracks over two March weekends.

The RB Scouts were the first to take to the track, holding their competition March 8 in the RB Elementary School cafeteria.

In addition to being the first area Derby of 2003, the RB event also boasted a new track, courtesy of Army Sgt. Michael Elovecky.

Elovecky, whose late father, Bill, had been an Eagle Scout, donated money to RB Pack 3 to purchase the new track.

"I wanted to do something in memory of my dad that the kids could enjoy for years to come," Elovecky said.

Two weeks after the RB races, scouts from Patch and Panzer squared off in simultaneous events March 22.

While the Panzer racers were zooming down the track in the Böblingen Elementary School all-purpose room, the Patch Scouts

Pinewood Derby resources online

BoyScouts.com
www.boyscouts.com

Boy Scouts of America
www.scoutstuff.org

ABC Pinewood Derby
www.abc-pinewood-derby.com

The Ultimate Derby Site
<http://members.aol.com/randywoo/pine/>

faced off in Patch Elementary School. As an added attraction for the Patch participants and spectators, their event also featured a "Raingutter Regatta" in which handmade boats were raced down parallel waterways.

The Derby, a traditional highlight on Scouting calendars, tests Scouts' abilities to craft and race wooden cars down a 32-foot track.

Founded in 1953 by Donald Murphy of Manhattan Beach, Calif., the event received national attention courtesy of a 1954 article in Boys' Life.



In addition to the "thrill of victory," Panzer scouts also competed for the right to hoist this trophy.